

**Cabinet for Health Services  
STATEWIDE NEWS RELEASE**

**Carpenters' Union Urges Membership Use of Smoking Cessation Classes**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 28, 2002)** - The Department for Public Health has joined in a unique partnership with the Kentucky State District Council of Carpenters (KSDCC) to help its members quit smoking.

The KSDCC Health and Welfare Trust Fund is offering members who smoke a new benefit - reimbursement for nicotine patches and nicotine gum - if the member is enrolled in an approved smoking cessation program.

Local health departments across the state are offering these classes as part of the state's Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Program that was funded with \$5.5 million in tobacco settlement money to help people stop smoking. All local health department classes are pre-approved in the KSDCC benefit program.

The local health departments are offering the Cooper/Clayton Method to Stop Smoking. The classes last 13 weeks, and most are free of charge. Some may charge a nominal fee, however, to cover the cost of class materials.

"People who stop smoking have the potential to prevent illness and optimize their health," said Steve Barger, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Carpenters' Union, which provides health benefits to 12,000 carpenters and family members across Kentucky. "Our goal is longer, healthier and more productive lives for our members and families."

A recent issue of the union's Health & Welfare newsletter, "Raising the Beam," noted that smoking-related diseases cause more than 430,000 deaths a year, and that smoking is a major cause of lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, ulcer, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

For information about Cooper/Clayton classes in your area, call your local health department or the Kentucky Cancer Program (in Louisville, 502-852-6318; in Lexington, 859-219-0772). Information about the Cooper/Clayton program can also be found at <http://www2.kcr.uky.edu/kcp>.